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INGROUP REJECTION AMONG WOMEN: THE ROLE OF PERSONAL INADEQUACY

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We examined predictors and outcomes of women's hostility toward other women. Based on a projection model, we hypothesized and tested the theory via structural equation modeling that women's sense of personal inadequacy, the tendency to stereotype, and general anger would predict hostility toward women, and hostility toward women would predict blaming victims of violence and poor relationships with a female friend. Participants were 464 college women with an average age of 28.08. All measures were pencil and paper. Women's hostility toward women served as an intervening variable between a personal sense of inadequacy, tendency to stereotype, blaming women victims of violence, and intimacy with one's best female friend.

> "I don't want to belong to any group that would have me as a member."
>
> —Groucho Marx

This study tests a model that includes the personal factors that may influence why some women are hostile toward other women and potential consequences of women's hostility toward women. Women's hostility toward other women can be defined as a generalized tendency of women to hold negative stereotypes of women as a group and to experience feelings of hostility toward and rejection of women (Check, 1988). The proclivity of subordinated group members to devalue their own group and to internalize negative stereotypes about their own group has been termed "false consciousness" (Jost & Banaji, 1994), horizontal hostility, or ingroup rejection. Jost and Banaji (1994) defined "false consciousness" as "the holding of beliefs that are contrary to one's personal or group interest and which thereby contribute to the maintenance of the disadvantaged position of the self or the group" (p. 3). False consciousness serves the purpose of preserving the status quo and upholding the notion of a just world in which the members of the disadvantaged group justify their own group subordination. (Although some would not classify women as a disadvantaged or subordinated group, an assumption of this study is that women have struggled for equality but remain vulnerable to policies that render them disadvantaged or even oppressed.) Implicit in this model is the idea that the consciousness of rejecting one's own group is false, yet it serves a psychological and ideological function.

What is the source of women's hostility toward women? Although the false consciousness model has been offered to understand support for the status quo among people whose personal and social interests do not coincide with the status quo (Jost & Banaji, 1994), the question remains as to why some members of disadvantaged groups choose to justify the status quo whereas others do not. From a cultural perspective, the devaluation and trivialization of women is likely to be internalized to some extent by most women. It would be a rare woman who is not exposed to cultural messages in many forms that present women as inferior to and less important than men. Because women as a group may be viewed as less valuable than men in a sexist culture, women can be targeted with negative stereotypes—by other women as well as by men. The social devaluation of women may create the propensity for women to devalue women as a group; however, the negative cultural messages do not affect all women equally. From a psychological perspective, individual differences in this tendency to be hostile toward women are important (see Chesler, 2002, for a cross-disciplinary comprehensive review of women's hostility toward other women).

Personal Inadequacy and Hostility Toward Women

We propose that at the individual level, women's hostility toward women reflects a sense of personal inadequacy (or negative self-views) and low perceived control over one's

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outcomes. It is unlikely that a woman could have a positive sense of personal worth and reject a central and immutable aspect of herself—in this case, her gender. We propose that projection might explain the relation between sense of personal inadequacy and ingroup rejection. The projection model posits that women's hostility toward women is a manifestation of dissatisfaction with themselves and that women project these negative self-beliefs on other women. Women who have a sense of personal inadequacy may project their negativity about themselves to women in general.

Holmes (1968, 1978) suggested that attributive projection allows people to acknowledge their inadequacy but conclude that their trait is not bad because others have it. This process of attributive projection seems relevant here because we are examining women's admission of personal inadequacy in relation to their hostility toward other women. In the case of women's hostility toward women, scapegoating can be directed toward one's own group, especially because socially acceptable prejudices about women already exist. Instead of boosting her ingroup or derogating outgroups, a person with a chronically threatened sense of self may choose to derogate her own group. The proposed path between personal inadequacy and hostility toward women is consistent with studies showing a relationship between high self-esteem and ingroup favoritism (Aberson, Healy, & Romero, 2000; Rubin & Hewstone, 1998). Conversely, a sense of personal inadequacy or low self-esteem may be related to ingroup rejection. When women experience a personal sense of inadequacy, other women may be viewed as "the enemy".

In addition to a sense of personal inadequacy, an underlying assumption is that other women serve as comparison persons (Major, 1994) and likely targets of competition for women. Women who feel competent and in control of their lives may experience less threat from other women (Cowan, Neighbors, DeLaMoreaux, & Behnke, 1998) and consequently experience less desire to compete with women and to derogate women. Crocker and Park (2004) suggested that striving for self-esteem can lead to the desire to be superior to others, hence competing with others. In the present model, women's competition with other women (i.e., the desire to be better than or perform better than other women) is considered a component of the hostility toward women construct. We propose that, within the larger construct of hostility toward women, women's intent to compete with other women reflects a sense of personal inadequacy and low perceived control.

Previous research (Cowan et al., 1998) has examined correlates of women's hostility toward women that include self-evaluations. The discrete predictors have not been combined based on a conceptual structural model. In one set of studies (Cowan et al., 1998), women's hostility toward women was negatively associated with personal self-esteem, collective self-esteem, and perceived similarity to other women and positively related to emotional dependence on men. Further, women's hostility toward women was negatively associated with life satisfaction, happiness, sexual happiness, and emotional, recreational, intellectual, and social intimacy with their male partners (Cowan et al., 1998). These findings suggest that women's hostility toward women is connected to important aspects of personal adjustment and mental health.

Tendency to Stereotype, Anger, and Hostility Toward Women

Two additional predictors of women's hostility toward women were examined. First, a woman who expresses generalized hostility toward women is demonstrating not only dislike and distrust of women, but she is also expressing a tendency to generalize across women. Women who characterize all women similarly would be expressing ingroup homogeneity, in contrast to the typical pattern of outgroup homogeneity. This tendency toward perceived ingroup homogeneity—perceiving women as alike—may be a reflection of a general tendency to stereotype. Thus, we expected that the tendency to stereotype others would predict hostility toward women. Second, we examined whether women's hostility toward other women could be accounted for by general hostility and anger not specifically directed at any one group—misanthropy rather than misogyny. In our model, anger served as a control variable to test the idea that women's hostility toward women was not simply a manifestation of a hostile and angry person, but instead, specifically directed toward women.

Hostility Toward Women and Outcome Factors

We expected that women's hostility toward women would mediate the relationship between negative self-views (and the tendency to stereotype) and female victim blame and negative relations with one's best female friend. Although men are more likely than women to blame female victims for their victimization (e.g., Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1995), women are not exempt from blaming female victims of rape, abuse, and sexual harassment. Women's hostility toward women—their distrust of and animosity toward other women—may reasonably affect their attributions about the causes of violence toward women. Hostility toward women has been associated with blaming female victims of violence (Cowan, 2000; Cowan et al., 1998; Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1995). For example, Cowan et al. (1998) found that women's hostility toward women was positively associated with acceptance of interpersonal violence against women. In subsequent research (Cowan, 2000), women's hostility toward women was positively associated with rape myths (female precipitation of rape and the idea that men cannot control their sexuality), acceptance of interpersonal violence against women, and blaming female victims of sexual harassment. In other research on women's and men's hostility toward women and violence, both men's and women's hostility toward women were found to be associated with acceptance of interpersonal violence,

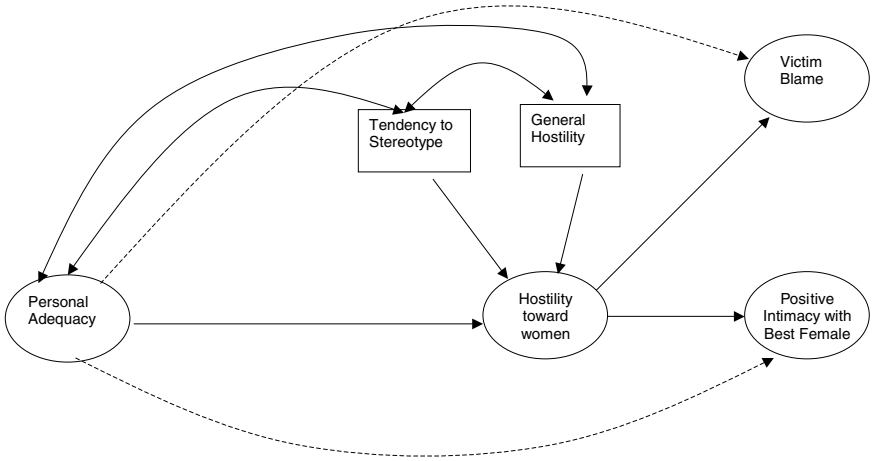

Fig. 1. Hypothesized structural equation models. Hypothesized Model 1 is indicated with both dotted and solid lines. Hypothesized Model 2 is indicated with solid lines only.

adversarial sexual beliefs, rape myths, and attitudes toward violence (Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1995). Hostility toward women accounted for 21% of the variance in women's rape myth acceptance scores.

The second outcome factor addressed in this study was women's intimacy with their best female friend. Previous research has demonstrated that women's hostility toward women was associated with a lower level of intimacy with their male partners (Cowan et al., 1998). Drawing a parallel between intimacy with a male partner and one's best female friend (with the exception of sexual intimacy), we are suggesting that the more a woman does not trust and like other women, the less likely she would be to experience a deep personal relationship with her best (female) friend. Casual relationships with other women do not require the sharing of recreational activities, emotional support, and intellectual sharing of ideas characteristic of an intimate relationship as does a relationship with one's best friend. Thus, we are proposing that these more personal elements of friendship with a female best friend are related to women's generalized hostility toward women.

Overview of Model

The theory guiding this research is that a sense of personal inadequacy—dissatisfaction with the self and with the self in relation to the external world—through projection influences women's hostility toward other women. Although alternative directions of influence could be posited, a projection model necessarily starts with internal feelings. According to this model, the dissatisfied woman displaces anger and hostility about her own personal sense of inadequacy to rejection of women. A personal sense of inadequacy, the tendency to stereotype, and a generalized anger should predict women's hostility toward women. We propose that hostility toward women influences the tendency to blame female victims of violence and influences women's relationships with their best female friend. We are proposing that hostility toward women is an intervening variable in the relationship between a sense of personal inadequacy and blaming female victims of violence, as well as between a sense of personal inadequacy and poor relationships with a best female friend.

We propose two models to examine our hypothesized relationships. The relationship between the constructs in both of the models is presented in Figure 1. In this diagram, circles represent constructs (latent variables) and squares represent measured variables. The lines indicate relationships to be tested. Absence of a line indicates no hypothesized relationship. It should be noted that this is a diagram of only the structural part of the model. The measurement portion of the model (the part of the model that relates the measured variables to the constructs) is not shown. The relationships to be tested in Model 1 are indicated with solid and dotted lines. The relationships to be tested in Model 2 are indicated only with solid lines. In Model 1 we hypothesized that a sense of personal inadequacy, tendency to stereotype, and general hostility would directly predict hostility toward women. We predicted that hostility toward women would directly predict victim blame and relationships with women. We also predicted that hostility toward women will serve as an intervening variable between general hostility and tendency to stereotype and the two outcome variables of interest: victim blame and relationships with women. In addition to hostility toward women as an intervening variable, we predicted direct relationships between a sense of inadequacy and victim blame and relationships with women friends (dotted lines).

In Model 2, our hypothesized model, we expected that the relationship between a sense of inadequacy and victim blame and relationships with women would be completely indirect. We expected that hostility toward women would serve as the intervening variable between the predictors and outcomes; therefore, in this model we hypothesized no direct effects between the predictors and outcome

variables. The viability of the second model with all indirect effects would provide a stronger test for the hypothesized process than a model with both direct and indirect relationships. The three independent variables in the model: sense of personal inadequacy, tendency to stereotype, and general hostility, were allowed to freely covary. We expected that the covariances between the tendency to stereotype and general hostility would be positive. We expected a positive relationship between a personal sense of inadequacy and the tendency to stereotype and also between a personal sense of inadequacy and general hostility.

METHOD

Participants

The sample consisted of 464 college women solicited from several sections of a large general education upper division class and from the research bulletin board of the psychology department of a western U.S. university. The average age of the participants was 28.08 years ($SD = 8.61$) and is typical of upper level students at this university. Of the 461 participants who identified their ethnicity, 53 (11.5%) were African American, 42 (9.1%) Asian, 240 (52.1%) White, 104 (22.6%) Latina, 3 (.6%) Native American, and 19 (4.1%) other. The majority (62.1%) reported annual incomes below $20,000. Nine participants were dropped from the sample because they self-identified as lesbians; of those remaining who identified their sexual orientation, 448 (98%) were heterosexual and 9 (2%) bisexual. We did not use self-identified lesbians in this study because part of the data collection involved the assessment of romantic relationships with men.

Procedure

Questionnaires were distributed in general education classes and returned at a later date or were obtained from a research bulletin board in the psychology department and returned to the Peer Advising Center. Extra credit was provided for participation.

Measures

Sense of personal inadequacy. Five measures of sense of personal (in)adequacy were used: personal self-esteem, dispositional optimism, internal control, control by chance, and control by powerful others. Scales were scored in the direction of personal adequacy. Personal adequacy included the individual's beliefs about the self (self-esteem) and beliefs about the relationship between the self and the responsiveness of the external world (locus of control and optimism). Personal self-esteem was measured by the 10-item Rosenberg (1965) Self-Esteem Scale. An example item from that scale is "On the whole, I am satisfied with myself." The scale is associated with many self-esteem–related constructs and is the standard instrument against which new self-esteem measures are evaluated (Blascovich & Tomaka, 1991). Item responses ranged from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). Cronbach's alpha was .89 in the present study. Higher scores indicated higher self-esteem.

Optimism was measured with the revised Life Orientation Test (LOT-R; Scheier, Carver, & Bridges, 1994). The LOT-R is a 6-item scale (with 4 filler items) that assesses the personality disposition of optimism versus pessimism. An example of an item is "Overall, I expect more good things to happen to me than bad." Higher scores indicated higher optimism. A Cronbach's alpha of .79 was found in the present study. The LOT-R has been shown to predict a large number of theoretically relevant responses (e.g., Scheier & Carver, 1992) and accounted for unique variance in depression and coping styles when neuroticism and other related dispositional attributes were controlled (Scheier et al., 1994). In a study of the factor structure of mental health measures, Compton, Smith, Cornish, and Qualls (1996) found that optimism and self-esteem loaded on the same subjective well-being factor.

Beliefs about personal control were measured by the Interpersonal Control scale (IPC; Levinson, 1981). The IPC scale has three subscales: (a) internality measures whether people believe that they are in control of their own lives (e.g., "I can pretty much determine what will happen in my life"), (b) powerful others measures the belief that other persons control the events in one's life (e.g., "My life is chiefly controlled by powerful others"), and (c) chance measures the extent to which a person believes that chance determines one's outcomes (e.g., "When I get what I want, it's usually because I'm lucky"). The IPC scale contains 24 items; 8 items from each scale are scored on a 6-point Likert-type scale with scores ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 6 (*strongly agree*). In the present study, Cronbach's alphas were: Internality: .52, Chance: .78, and Powerful Others: .76. The scales are related to achievement, occupational behavior, social-political involvement, and interpersonal perception and behavior (Lefcourt, 1991). Higher scores indicate a higher level of internality, control by chance, and control by powerful others.

Hostility toward women. Hostility toward women was measured using three scales. The Hostility Toward Women scale developed by Check, Malamuth, Elias, and Barton (1985) to be administered to men was modified by Lonsway and Fitzgerald (1995) to be administered to women. The modified Hostility Toward Women scale was used and consisted of a 10-item Likert-type scale, anchored by 1 (*strongly disagree*) and 7 (*strongly agree*). A sample item is "I think that most women would lie just to get ahead." Cronbach's alpha was .84 in the present study.

The second scale used to assess the construct of hostility toward women was Glick and Fiske's (1996; 1997) Hostile Sexism Scale, part of the Ambivalent Sexism Inventory. Glick and Fiske developed a measure that assesses both hostile sexism and benevolent sexism. The hostile sexism subscale was used in the present study. According to

Glick and Fiske (1997), "hostile sexism seeks to justify male power, traditional gender roles, and men's exploitation of women as sexual objects through derogatory characterization of women" (p. 121). A sample item is "Women seek to gain power by getting control over men." This 11-item scale is scored on a Likert-type scale with responses ranging from 0 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). In the present study, Cronbach's alpha was .84. For both scales, higher scores indicated more hostility toward women.

The competition subscale of the Work and Family Orientation Questionnaire (WOFO; Spence & Helmreich, 1983) was used as the third indicator of the hostility toward women construct. It measures "the enjoyment of interpersonal competition and the desire to win and be better than others" (Spence & Helmreich, 1983, p. 41). We make the distinction between intrasex competition and need to achieve. The achievement construct specifically focused on competition with a standard of excellence, rather than on either ingroup or outgroup competition. All items were modified to assess competition with women specifically. A sample item is "I feel that winning over other women is important in both work and games." Two items were constructed and added to the 5-item scale. The added items were "I always try to look better than other women around me" and "It is important for me to do better than women that I go to school or work with." Items were scored on a 7-point scale, ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). Cronbach's alpha of this 7-item scale was .91. Higher scores indicated more competitiveness with women.

Perceived relationships with best friend. The Personal Assessment of Intimacy in Relationships (PAIR; Schaefer & Olson, 1981) provides a multidimensional view of intimacy and an assessment of closeness in various components of a relationship. Although developed to measure heterosexual intimacy, in the present study the PAIR was used to measure perceived intimacy with one's best female friend. For the present study, three subscales were used: emotional, intellectual, and recreational intimacy. Emotional intimacy is defined as the experience of closeness of feelings (e.g., "My friend listens to me when I need someone to talk to"), intellectual intimacy as the experience of sharing ideas (e.g., "We have an endless number of things to talk about"), and recreational intimacy as the experience of sharing interests in hobbies and activities (e.g., "We enjoy the same recreational activities"). Schaefer and Olson (1981) described the PAIR as a profile test, with separate scores for each type of intimacy. Six items are used to assess each type of intimacy. In the present study, the response format was a 7-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). Higher scores indicated higher levels of intimacy. Cronbach's alphas ranged from .76 to .82 for the subscales.

Violence-promoting attitudes. Four measures were used to assess women's acceptance of attitudes that promote violence against women. Two subscales from the Cowan and Quinton (1997) Perceived Causes of Rape scale were used: female precipitation (6 items) and male sexuality (7 items). These two scales assess rape myths that tend to blame the female victim and to exonerate the male rapist. The female precipitation scale assessed the extent to which female victims are seen as precipitating rape (e.g., "rape is caused by women who tease men"), and the male sexuality scale assessed the extent to which men are seen as unable to control their sex drives (e.g., "Men who can't control their sexual drives"). The scale items were prefaced by the phrase "Rape is caused by . . ." A 7-point Likert-type scale was used, anchored by 1 (*strongly disagree*) and 7 (*strongly agree*). Cronbach's alphas were .88 for the female precipitation subscale and .84 for the male sexuality subscale.

To measure blaming the female victim of sexual harassment, the 12-item Sexual Harassment Myth scale (Cowan, 2000) was used. A sample item is "Sexual harassment usually happens because women lead men on." Item responses were on a 7-point Likert-type scale, with responses ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly degree*). Cronbach's alpha was .92.

The Acceptance of Interpersonal Violence scale (Burt, 1980) was used to measure the sanctioning of force and coercion to gain compliance in interpersonal relationships. Five of the six items on this scale are directed toward the acceptability of violence toward women rather than violence in general. A sample item is "Being roughed up is sexually stimulating to many women." Responses were given on a Likert-type scale, anchored by 1 (*strongly disagree*) and 7 (*strongly agree*). Cronbach's alpha in the present study was .56. For the four scales, higher scores indicated a higher level of blame of female victims.

Other predictors of hostility toward women. Spielberger et al.'s (1985) 10-item inventory assessing the extent of anger one generally feels (Trait Anger) was used as a general hostility control measure to assess the relations between hostility toward women and the other latent variables. A sample item is "I am quick-tempered." A 4-point Likert-type scale was used, anchored by 1 (*almost never*) and 4 (*almost always*). Higher scores indicated more anger. Cronbach's alpha was .84.

The Personal Need for Structure scale (PNS; Neuberg & Newsom, 1993) was used to assess the tendency to stereotype. As an individual difference variable, PNS is defined as a need for certainty and structure. Schaller, Boyd, Yahannes, and O'Brien (1995) found that high-PNS participants were more likely to form erroneous group stereotypes than low-PNS participants. Hence, PNS may be useful as a stereotyping predictor of hostility toward women, which in itself involves the tendency to describe the category "women" as if all women were alike. The PNS scale consists of 11 items on a 6-point Likert-type scale, ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 6 (*strongly agree*). A sample item is "I enjoy having a clear and structured mode of life." The alpha coefficient

was .81. Higher scores indicated a stronger need for certainty and structure.

RESULTS

Analysis

Structural equation modeling was employed to test the hypothesized relationships in these models. After testing assumptions, we conducted a two-step approach, with confirmation of the measurement model first and testing the structural model second. We performed a confirmatory factor analysis of the measures in the measurement model. Following confirmation of an adequate measurement model fit, we tested both full structural models. The fit statistics used to evaluate the fit of the measurement model and the structural models were the Satorra-Bentler scaled chi-square statistic, the Comparative Fit Index (CFI), and the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA). A good model fit is indicated by a nonsignificant chi-square, values greater than .90 on the CFI, and a value less than .08 on the RMSEA (Hu & Bentler, 1995).

Assumptions

The assumptions were tested using both SPSS 11.0 and EQS 6.0. No univariate or multivariate outliers were detected. The means and standard deviations are presented in Table 1. All scale scores were averaged. No variables were missing in more than 5% of the cases. The maximum likelihood estimation using the expectation-maximization algorithm was used to impute missing data (Little & Rubin, 1987). Based on Mardia's normalized coefficient, there was evidence of violation of multivariate normality, normalized estimate = 24.12, $p < .001$. Given this nonnormality, the models were estimated using maximum likelihood estimation and evaluated with the Satorra-Bentler scaled chi-square (Satorra & Bentler, 2001). The standard errors of the parameter estimates were adjusted to the extent of the nonnormality (Bentler & Dijkstra, 1985). We evaluated the significance of the intervening variables using tests of indirect effects through EQS (Sobel, 1988). This method of examining intervening variables has more power than the mediating variable approach (Baron & Kenny, 1986; MacKinnon, Lockwood, Hoffman, West, & Sheets, 2002).

Confirmatory Factor Analysis and Structural Equation Models

For the confirmatory factor analysis, there was evidence of an adequate model fit, Satorra-Bentler Scaled χ^2 (464, 102) = 230.85, $p < .05$; Robust CFI = .94; RMSEA = .05. The factor loadings, means, and standard deviations are given in Table 1, and the correlations among the constructs are given in Table 2. There was evidence of a good fit for the hypothesized Model 1 (direct and indirect effects model), Satorra-Bentler Scaled χ^2 (464, 109) = 260.29, $p <$ .05; Robust CFI = .93; RMSEA = .05, 90% Confidence

Table 1

Standardized and Unstandardized Factor Loadings for Confirmatory Factor Analysis and Means and Standard Deviations of Measured Variables ($N = 464$)

Construct	*Measured variable*	*Unstandardized coefficient (standard error)*	*Standardized coefficient*	*Mean (SD)*
Personal adequacy	Optimism (LOT)	.58 (.04)	.77	4.58 (.75)
	Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale	.85 (.05)	.78	5.61 (1.08)
	Internal control beliefs	.20 (.03)	.33	4.27 (.60)
	Chance control beliefs	−.49 (.04)	−.60	2.80 (.82)
	Power control beliefs	−.39 (.04)	−.50	2.79 (.78)
Hostility toward women	Hostility toward women	.73 (.04)	.71	3.25 (1.03)
	Hostile sexism	.65 (.04)	.74	3.11 (.88)
	Competition with women	.62 (.06)	.46	3.46 (1.37)
Victim blame	Acceptance of interpersonal violence	.39 (.03)	.55	2.99 (.71)
	Perceived causes of rape: female precipitation	.97 (.06)	.74	2.54 (1.35)
	Perceived causes of rape: male sexuality	.65 (.06)	.50	2.86 (1.31)
	Sexual harassment scale	.96 (.05)	.90	2.17 (1.07)
Intimacy with best female friend	Intimacy: emotional	.92 (.05)	.79	5.46 (1.16)
	Intimacy: intellectual	.93 (.05)	.88	5.63 (1.06)
	Intimacy: recreational	.67 (.05)	.64	5.22 (1.04)
Tendency to stereotype	Tendency to stereotype	1.00	1.00	3.90 (.66)
General hostility	General hostility	1.00	1.00	1.89 (.51)

Note. All unstandardized factor loadings are significant at $p < .05$.

Table 2

Correlations and Covariances Among Constructs in Confirmatory Factor Analysis

	Personal adequacy	*Hostility toward women*	*Victim blame*	*Intimacy with best female friend*	*Anger*
Hostility	−.47				
toward women	(−.46)*				
Victim blame	−.26	.76			
	(−.26)*	(.76)*			
Relationships	.47	−.37	−.28		
with women	(.47)*	(−.37)*	(−.28)*		
Anger	−.38	.32	.14	−.22	
	(−.19)*	(.16)*	(.07)*	(−.11)*	
Tendency to	−.17	.17	.08	−.06	.22
stereotype	(−.11)*	(.11)*	(.05)	(−.04)	(.07)*

*$p < .05$.

Interval .05–.06. There was also evidence of adequate fit for hypothesized Model 2 (indirect effects only model), Satorra-Bentler Scaled χ^2 (464, 111) = 293.14, $p < .05$; Robust CFI = .92; RMSEA = .06, 90% Confidence Interval .05–.07. However, a Satorra-Bentler Scaled chi-square difference test indicated that hypothesized Model 2 was significantly worse than Model 1, Satorra-Bentler Scaled $\chi^2_{\text{differnece}}$ (464, 2) = 27.86, $p < .05$ (Satorra & Bentler, 2001). Therefore, the indirect-effect-only model (Model 2) was not further examined. Instead, hypothesized Model 1 (direct and indirect effects model) was retained. Figure 2 presents the final modified model with standardized coefficients and unstandardized coefficients in parentheses. Indirect effects (intervening variables) are not included in the diagram but are discussed in the text.

Direct Effects, Indirect Effects, and Percent of Variance Accounted for in the Constructs

As shown in Figure 2, personal inadequacy and a greater tendency to stereotype directly predicted greater hostility toward women, together accounting for 25.4% of the variance in hostility toward women. General hostility was not associated with hostility toward women.

Hostility toward women directly predicted increased victim blame and worse relationships with women. Additionally, a sense of personal adequacy predicted better relationships with women. The combination of the direct effects of hostility toward women and the indirect effects of a sense of personal inadequacy and the tendency to stereotype accounted for a substantial amount of variance in victim blame

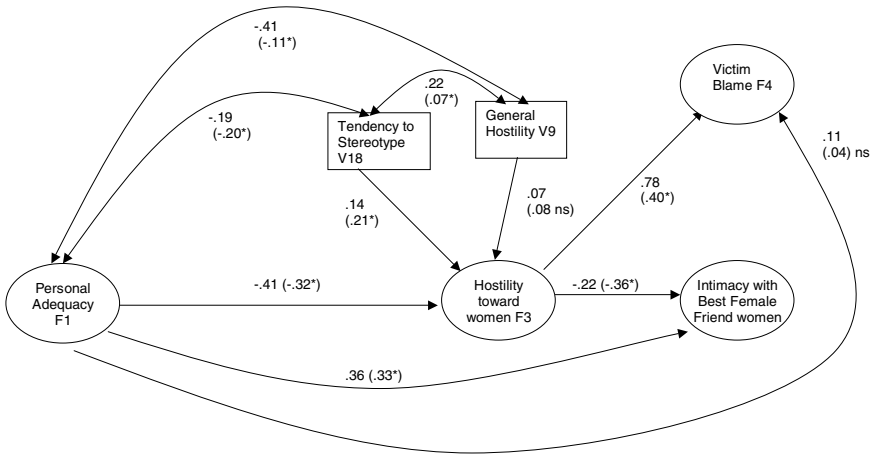

Fig. 2. Final structural equation model with regression coefficients presented in standardized form and unstandardized in parentheses. Significance tests were performed on unstandardized coefficients. Residuals were estimated but are not included in the diagram for ease of interpretation. *$p < .05$.

(53.5%). The direct effects of hostility toward women and a sense of personal inadequacy accounted for 25.4% of the variance in relationships with women.

Hostility toward women served as an intervening variable between personal inadequacy and victim blame and relationships with women and also between tendency to stereotype and victim blame. Greater personal inadequacy led to increased hostility toward women, increased victim blame (unstandardized indirect coefficient = −.13, $p <$ .05, standardized coefficient = .32), and a lower level of intimate relationships with one's best female friend (unstandardized indirect coefficient = −.08, $p <$ .05, standardized coefficient = −.09). A greater tendency to stereotype led to increased hostility toward women, which predicted more victim blame (unstandardized indirect coefficient = .08, $p <$ .05, standardized coefficient = .11).

DISCUSSION

A sense of personal inadequacy predicted hostility toward women. This finding supports the projection model—that women who have a sense of inadequacy are more likely to project these negative feelings onto other women, making other women the targets of their personal malaise. It is not that women who are hostile toward other women project the same dimensions that define their sense of inadequacy. Rather, women see themselves as inadequate and unworthy and project these negative judgments of themselves onto other women. Perhaps women who have a sense of inadequacy blame other women for their problems and hold other women accountable for their own vulnerabilities. In a patriarchal culture, it is easier to scapegoat other women than to examine the system that sustains a pattern of patriarchy.

Dasgupta (2004) discussed two forces that influence attitudes about ingroups, both of which apply to women's hostility toward women: (a) the tendency to "prefer groups associated with the self as a confirmation of their positive self-esteem" (p. 163) and (b) the tendency to prefer groups higher in the hierarchy to justify the hierarchical system as it exists (Jost & Banaji, 1994). For women with low self-esteem, rejecting their own group may be a function of both of these forces: an expression of low self-esteem and an acceptance of social stereotypes devaluing women (hostility toward women). System justification does occur (e.g., Jost & Banaji, 1994), but from the present study, we speculate that it is most likely to happen to those whose devaluation in the larger culture has been internalized and has resulted in a sense of personal inadequacy.

In addition, our study also presents some evidence that the often noted high self-esteem, ingroup favoritism effect (e.g., Aberson et al., 2000; Rubin & Hewstone, 1998) can work in reverse. Just as high self-esteem is related to ingroup acceptance, low self-esteem is related to ingroup rejection. Further, hostility toward women served as an intervening variable or mediator between a sense of personal inadequacy and victim blame and relationships with a best female friend. The path between hostility toward women and victim blame was particularly strong. The combination of hostility toward women and, indirectly, a sense of personal inadequacy and the tendency to stereotype contributed to more than half the variance in victim blame. The link between personal inadequacy and hostility toward women is stronger than the link between tendency to stereotype and hostility toward women; however, we believe that both are important. Not only does a personal sense of inadequacy help us understand why women might reject their own group as a self-protective mechanism, but the perceived homogeneity of women may be an important factor as well. That is, the tendency for women to reject women as a group may be facilitated by the tendency to see all women as alike, with oneself as an exception (Cowan et al., 1998). If one regards the ingroup as an outgroup, the perception of homogeneity of its members is likely.

Regarding women's relationships with their best female friend, both proposed models had a good fit. More statistical support was found for our first model that included direct and indirect effects than the model incorporating only indirect effects. Close relationships with a best female friend was predicted both by a sense of personal adequacy and indirectly through less hostility toward women. Women who felt better about themselves reported a more intimate relationship with their best female friend. That women's feelings of personal adequacy and their hostility toward women as a group should extend to women's closeness and intimacy with specific women in their lives is not surprising.

Women's hostility toward and rejection of women as a group can have important consequences for women's welfare. In their roles as judges, jurors, acquaintances, family, and friends, women may express hostility toward other women by blaming them for their victimization and failing to support those who have been victimized. It is important to hold male perpetrators, not women victims, accountable for their violence against women (Koss et al., 1994). In a world in which female victims are still blamed for their victimization and rape myths persist (Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1995), the strong relation between hostility toward women and victim blame and the intervening effect of hostility toward women on the relationship between a sense of inadequacy and blaming female victims support the idea that completely eradicating women victim blame is a difficult task that requires more than direct education.

Dasgupta (2004) presented evidence suggesting that negative biases toward one's own group can harm the self as well. Women's hostility toward women may also lead to avoidance of close friendships with women. In addition, women who are hostile toward other women may take political positions that are not in the best interests of women as a group and may support candidates whose platforms are contrary to women's interests. In current times, when the women's movement has become less important to women

and women believe that they have attained the goals of the women's movement (Mitchell & Eagly, 2003), the difficulties in ingroup identification and shared goals, as well as the vigilance needed to protect women's rights and to prevent policy backlash, are still relevant. Without ingroup identification, women may not believe it is important to sustain their efforts on behalf of all women.

The question of the importance of enhancing women's identification and liking of other women involves what feminist activist Gloria Steinem seemed to emphasize when she wrote about the importance of self-esteem (Steinem, 1992). The findings of this study suggest that an important strategy to ensure women's support of other women and to prevent blaming women for the violence committed against them is to provide avenues in which girls and women can grow up liking, respecting, and valuing themselves and believing that they have control over their own lives. One possible avenue of change is to deemphasize competition among women, especially in areas that are emphasized in the media, such as weight, youth, and attractiveness.

Aspects of body objectification, including body shame and body surveillance (McKinley & Hyde, 1996), are related to women's hostility toward women (Loya, Cowan, & Walters, in press). Women who are more hostile toward other women express higher levels of self-surveillance and body shame. Crocker and Wolfe (2001) proposed that self-worth is contingent on the specific domains that are important to the individual, and in the case of women, that often happens to be their appearance.

A limitation of this study was that the sample comprised college women only. Although we anticipate that the model would be applicable to diverse samples of women, a fuller understanding of women's hostility toward women could be obtained by examining women in the work force, particularly those who have high-level positions. We could then assess whether women whose contingent self-worth may be broader and more competence-based than that of college women would demonstrate the same relations between hostility toward women and the outcome variables. Another limitation is the failure to examine social comparison directly or to examine the particular perceived aspects of other women that generate hostility and dislike. If social comparison with other women is implicit, we would expect that women who are more hostile toward other women would feel badly when they compare with another woman or would devalue the comparison woman. Also, because the hostility toward women measures are generic and do not mention specific negative attributes, it would be informative to investigate exactly which dimensions hostile women dislike in other women. A third limitation is the failure to examine many other relevant variables that may be associated with women's hostility toward women, such as attitudes toward social issues relevant to women, competition for men, or earlier socialization variables. Future work might explore other dimensions relevant to women's ingroup rejection and, in addition, determine whether this phenomenon is similar to ingroup rejection among other groups (e.g., ethnicity, sexual orientation, social class) and whether women's ingroup rejection is associated with rejection of other subordinated groups.

Another problem in measuring these variables with questionnaires is the possibility of the effects of response sets. Social desirability may account for some of the overlap between any of the measures and factors in the study because all can be categorized as socially desirable or undesirable responses. We controlled for anger but not for social desirability. Future studies should include a social desirability measure to control for response bias. Another limitation is the cross-sectional design employed in this study. Although we have a theoretical basis for the direction of the predictive paths in the model, it is possible that some of the relationships are reversed from our theoretical model. In future research, it would be helpful to examine these relationships longitudinally. Correlational data cannot prove causation. The structural equation model simply describes whether the data would fit a causal model. For example, it is possible that having an intimate relationship with another woman contributes to her personal sense of adequacy and generalizes to respect and liking for women as a group rather than that a personal sense of adequacy causes intimacy in relationships.

To summarize, a sense of personal inadequacy and the tendency to stereotype predicted women's hostility toward women. In turn, hostility toward women predicted victim-blaming attitudes and less intimacy with one's best female friend. Hostility toward women explained the relationships between a sense of personal inadequacy and victim blame and partially explained intimacy with one's best female friend. Our results provide evidence that fostering a sense of competency and self-worth among women may contribute to women's identification and liking for other women. In turn, women's liking of other women may mitigate female victim blame among women and possibly help cement the bonds that provide social support to continue to work for women's rights.

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